6. Need for restricting the registry of *puduvals* in the Nedumangad taluk to ten acres in the name of a single individual and the recovery of *puduval kudichika* for a period of 5 years.

Mr. A. Kumaraswami Pillai (Member, Nedumangad taluk) complained that large areas of *puduval* land registered in the names of wealthy foreigners and officials were not brought under cultivation and that large blocks of land were still being registered in the names of big officials and influential Vakils. *Puduval* lands were not being readily granted to the poor natives of the taluk. The lands improved by the poor ryots at considerable cost and labour were often assigned to influential officials. In the case of lands granted to wealthy and influential men *tharavila* never exceeded Rs. 5 per acre, while it went up to Rs. 20 or 25 in the case of poor persons. The discretion vested in the Revenue Officers in fixing the rate of *tharavila* in individual cases was often arbitrarily used, without regard to the quality and fertility of the soil. There was the same differential treatment in the recovery of *thadivila* also. Priority of application and improvements effected on the land were often ignored and instances were not wanting of lands, for which *ozhugus* were prepared in the names of poor ryots, having been granted to wealthy competitors without even a notice being given to the former. If the poor ryots did not pay the dues on the lands on the specified dates, proceedings were started against them under the Land Conservancy Regulation and they were deprived of the lands which they had improved at much cost and labour. In view to remove the above evils the Member submitted the following suggestions for the consideration of Government :—

(1) that, in the case of *puduval* lands registered in the names of the poor natives of the Nedumangad taluk, a uniform *tharavila* of Rs. 5 per acre might be fixed ;

(2) that *puduval* lands exceeding 10 acres in extent should not be registered in the name of a single individual ;

(3) that the registry of *puduvals* in the names of foreigners be prohibited ;

(4) that *puduval* lands should, as far as possible, be registered in the names of the occupants, if any ;

(5) that proceedings under the Land Conservancy Regulation should not be started against the occupants of *puduval* land, if they failed to pay up the dues thereon ; and

(6) that arrears of assessment should not be recovered for any period exceeding 5 years.

Dewan's reply.—Noted. Under section 18 of the Puduval Rules, back arrears of assessment are not recoverable for more than five years.

7. Hardships experienced in the registry of *puduval* lands and suggestions for remedying them.

Mr. K. Paul B. A. & B. L. (Member, Nominated) described the hardships experienced by the people, especially the poor classes, in regard to the registry of *puduval* lands. The extreme complexity of the system of land registration was responsible for much hardship. The *puduval* applications were not disposed of expeditiously and in some cases it took several years before registration proceedings were completed and *pattas* issued.

The inordinate delay in the disposal of *puduval* applications afforded ample opportunities to clever and influential persons to step in in time to lay claim to the lands improved by poor ryots at great labour and cost and also gave sufficient facilities to the relations of the registering officers to get the lands registered in their names. The method of fixing the rates of *tharavila* and *thadivila* was another instrument of hardship. Though the minimum rate of *tharavila* was fixed in the rules, the rate for individual lands varied according to the whims of the Revenue Officers. Further, the preparation of *ozhugus* with imaginary persons as *thadasthars*, the inaccuracy of the survey plans and measurements, the difficulty and delay in obtaining copies of records and the mysterious disappearance of *puduval* applications, increased the

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difficulties in the matter. The Member stated that there were about 4,500 acres of unregistered waste lands in the Trivandrum taluk still available for registry and the occupants of some of those lands might at any time be evicted therefrom. He suggested that the disposal of that area should be expedited by the appointment of a special staff or by the delegation of special powers to the existing staff as had been done in the *pakuthies* of Kaliyal, Neyyattinkara, Konni, &c.

The Member then submitted the following proposals for the consideration of Government :—

(1) For the disposal of *puduval* work, a special department should be created, or a Tahsildar with a staff of surveyors be appointed for the whole State, or one extra Tahsildar be appointed for each Revenue Division, or a Deputy Tahsildar with the powers of a Tahsildar be appointed for each taluk.

(2) Particulars of the unregistered lands in each taluk still available for registry should be published for the information of the public.

(3) All applications for *puduval* lands should be registered in the Sub-Registry Offices on payment of a small fee.

(4) When applications were disposed of, information should be furnished to the applicants.

(5) Large areas should be granted to a single individual, only when they were not required for small holdings for the benefit of the poor.

(6) The registry of areas not brought under cultivation within 5 years from the date of registry should be cancelled and the lands granted to others.

(7) Occupancy rights over *puduval* lands should be made inalienable.

(8) Alienations of registered lands within 5 years from the date of registry should not be allowed.

(9) No applicant should be permitted to occupy unregistered areas before registry was effected.

(10) Arrears of tax for the period before the date of registry should not be imposed.

(11) A uniform rate of *tharavila* should be fixed and published.

(12) Cart tracks should be provided in large areas of *puduval* lands.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

8. Hardships experienced by the poor people on account of the present policy of Government in the matter of *puduval* registry.

Mr. D. Kumaran Potti (Member, Pathanamthitta taluk) thanked the Government for the partition of the Chengannur taluk into two and the creation of the Pathanamthitta taluk. He stated that poor ryots occupied and improved portions of unregistered waste lands in the hills lying near the forests before they applied for registry and that very often the lands in their occupation and enjoyment were being registered in the names of other persons. In certain cases objections were raised and disputes arose and the lands under dispute brought to sale by auction. Poor ryots who were in possession and enjoyment of the lands were proceeded against under the Land Conservancy Regulation and evicted therefrom. He also submitted that, in disregard of the applications from natives of the State, the lands in several cases were being granted to foreigners and also registered in the names of relations of officials. He, therefore, made the following proposals for the consideration of Government :—

(1) A Committee consisting of trustworthy officials and respectable non-officials should be appointed for each taluk and the Taluk authorities should, in the matter of registry of *puduval* lands, be guided by their advice.

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